

News Release

Public Safety

Matt Blunt, Governor Mark James, Director

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Blunt Finalizes Homeland Security Council with Appointment of Three Public Members

JEFFERSON CITY, August 8, 2005—Gov. Matt Blunt today announced his final three selections to serve as public members on the Missouri Homeland Security Council under the direction of Public Safety Director and council chairman Mark James.

Robert Wylie, 44, of St. Peters, currently serves as the Assistant Chief of the Central Co. Fire Protection District in St. Charles. Wylie is an expert in the homeland security arena and has overseen the Homeland Security Response Team in the St. Louis/Warren County area for the past 10 years. He has also been a key strategist for security in high profile events such as presidential visits, the 1999 visit of Pope John Paul II, and the 2004 World Series playoffs in St. Louis. Wylie also serves on the Missouri Fire Safety Advisory Board appointed by the governor.

Mick Covington, 53, of Columbia, is the Executive Director of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association. Covington brings over 30 years of law enforcement officer and management experience to the Homeland Security Council. He graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy to eventually assume the rank of Captain while commanding the Patrol Division, the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit, and the Investigative unit during a 20-year service to the Columbia Police Department. As Executive Director of the Missouri Sheriffs' Association, Covington is responsible for assessing, planning and coordinating law enforcement training and standards throughout the state.

Harold Bengsch, 69, of Springfield, served 45 years in the public health field before becoming Greene County Commissioner in 2004. He is a former president of the Public Health Association, the International Association for Food Protection (IAFP), and has won many national and state awards for his service. Bengsch has given lectures nationally on

homeland security and bio-terrorism and developed a comprehensive bio-terrorism response plan for Green County and surrounding regions. Bengsch is also a founding member of the American College of Forensic Examiners Institute's Homeland Security Board of Certification.

Blunt named the men to the three public member seats on the Missouri Homeland Security Council.

“With the appointment of these three Missourians to the council, I am confident that we now have the best minds in security, law enforcement and crisis and disaster planning coming together at one table to work for the safety of all Missourians,” Blunt said. “In these times, it is necessary for our state to have such a council.”

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